

MINUTES
MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2018; 6:30 P.M.

MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Ashley Brady	Councilman Michael Baker
Mayor Pro-Tem Emerson Hunt	Councilman Joseph Frazier
Councilman Ralph Atkinson	Councilwoman Tassie Lewis
Councilman Ronald Atkinson	

STAFF PRESENT:

Alan Ammons, City Administrator	James Brogdon, City Attorney
Gwendolyn Davis, City Clerk	Cliff Wilbanks, Recreation Director
Patricia Brown, City Treasurer	Officer Derrick Smith

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Ashley Brady called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed all guests.

2. PRAYER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Ashley Brady requested a moment of silence for Judge Patricia Speth who was laid to rest earlier that day. Mayor Ashley Brady led the opening prayer and Mr. Alan Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. WELCOME CITIZENS, GUESTS & PRESS

Mayor Brady welcomed citizens, guests, and the press (Hometown TV 8). He encouraged citizens to continuously come to the meetings to be informed on what is happening in the City of Marion. He also recognized Ms. Stephanie Indergaard (Executive Director of HMRA) as well as Ms. Marilyn Woodberry.

4. APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING October 9, 2018

A motion was made by Councilman Michael Baker, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on October 9, 2018. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Frazier stated that he did not see his comments about the county spraying for mosquitos in the minutes. Mayor Brady found the comments and read them, adding that it was on page 4. Councilman Ralph Atkinson stated that he inquired about the county not spraying for mosquitos the next day and was informed that the funds did not come from the taxpayer's money but rather a grant from Marion County Healthcare Foundation.

5. APPROVE MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

A motion was made by Councilman Michael Baker, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on October 31, 2018. The motion passed unanimously.

6. OCTOBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Mr. Ellis Green with the Public Works Department was named October Employee of the Month. Mayor Brady stated that Mr. Green is a good guy and can be seen cutting the grass or bush hogs.

7. Reappoint Vivian Rogers to PDRTA Board of Directors

A motion was made by Councilman Joseph Frazier to reappoint Ms. Vivian Rogers to the PDRTA Board of Directors, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker. The motion passed unanimously.

8. HMRA – Update

Stephanie Indergaard, the Executive Director of HMRA, updated council on the façade grants. She stated that they gave two \$5,000 grants to companies to help them enhance their buildings. They will be rewarding two more companies with façade grants for \$7,500. HMRA contributed \$2,000 to give another grant and the companies are very excited about the money they will be receiving to make improvements to Main Street. Ms. Indergaard made the council aware of the "Signage and Paint" campaign in which the HMRA will help businesses replace their signage or add exterior paint to their building. They will pay 60% of the signage up to \$500 and up to \$750 for the paint. They have 7-10 applications on this for which their committee reviews and will pass it to the Historic Commission to approve. She also mentioned that this is the 3rd year they will host a Music Festival on Main Street. HMRA has been working with the Chamber of Commerce to have events quarterly and she mentioned two recent movie nights they hosted.

Councilman Joseph Frazier commented this is the first time HMRA has given a report and he is glad that they are making an attempt to help the City of Marion.

9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**A. Update on CTC Projects**

Mr. Ammons stated that the Marshall Street Drainage Project is complete and functioning properly. He added that unless there is another hurricane or something similar, the city should not have any more problems. The projects on Cherokee Ave and Harmon Park area is about 90% complete and is functioning. He added that it would be a week or so before they will start.

B. Miscellaneous

Mr. Ammons mentioned that he met with the Green Bulb company and they have everything they need. As soon as they send their proposal back, they will present it to City Council for review.

Mr. Ammons also mentioned that it was time for the UNCF sponsor fund and there are four tickets. He stated that if more than 4 tickets were needed he would need to know ahead of time.

10. CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

City Attorney James Brogden made Council aware that he along with Representative Lucas Atkinson and Senator Kent Williams would give turkeys to all the first responders in the county. He stated that they would be stationed behind the county administration building and they would also be at Marion Fire Department, Sheriff Department and the City Police Department. He invited Council to attend if they chose to and added that it is a small way to give back to say thank you for what they do.

11. DISTRICT AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL AND MAYOR

Mayor Brady stated that he attended the Jackson and McGill Appreciation Day at their facility and they had a fantastic turnout. He mentioned all of the children running around having a good time, horse rides in the back for the children and food. He added that they recognized the first responders, the City Police Department and the Fire Department. He added that Jackson and McGill are celebrating their 90th anniversary and asked for a motion to present them with a proclamation for being in business for 90 years at the next council meeting.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to move forward with a proclamation to honor Jackson and McGill's 90th anniversary of business in the City of Marion, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Brady made mention of the Veteran's Day parade that he was a part of, along with other members of council to celebrate the heroes who put their life on the line. He acknowledged some members on council who have also served and was appreciative of them protecting our freedom. He spoke of the Veteran's Day program at the triangle on South Main St adding that former Mayor Rodney Berry was present and gave a very inspirational talk. He stated that next year he would like the city to also have chicken bog or a barbecue in addition to what they already do to recognize the veterans. He acknowledged that the city crews and public works are diligently working to put up lights in preparation for Christmas. He informed every one of the Christmas Parade sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce on December 1, 2018. He also mentioned the Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration, followed by the Fireworks Show that everyone looks

forward to on December 2, 2018. On December 8, 2018 the Pilot Club will be hosting the Marion Bazaar at 10 am and the Marion County Museum will be hosting a Luncheon at 12pm. The Historic Marion Christmas Tour of Homes will also be on December 8, 2018 sponsored by the Marion Chamber of Commerce and the Pilot Club of Marion. He encouraged everyone to visit the merchants in Historic Downtown Marion on December 13, 2018. He stated that he along with others met with FEMA representatives for reimbursements from Hurricane Florence. He added that they would be doing inspections on some of the city's sites. He mentioned the Capital Sales Tax that was on the ballot the previous week and that it was approved. The City of Marion was approved for two projects including the Green Street Sports Complex Expansion and Renovations at City Hall.

Councilman Michael Baker asked Mr. Ammons how long it took for FEMA to reimburse after Hurricane Matthew. He asked if it was about two years. Mr. Ammons stated that the City just received a check about a month ago for the ice storm that occurred before Hurricane Matthew. Councilman Michael Baker added that he wanted everyone to know that it will not be a quick process.

Councilman Joseph Frazier did not have any comments.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made mention to a house on Oliver St that was in bad condition but it was taken care of.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson acknowledged Mr. Cliff Wilbanks and stated that he has heard many good things about what he is doing in the Recreation Department. He thanked him for all he does and added that he will have his hands full with the capital sales tax.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis mentioned the Rise Above It All Program, explaining that the theme meant that with God you can rise above anything. They would be giving away coats to children affected by Hurricane Florence or children who are need based. Fox 84 initiative donated coats prior to their Washington, DC trip in which they took the young boys to tour Howard University. She thanked them for coming to Marion and showing the children that they can be law abiding productive citizens. She stated that she had the pleasure and privilege of speaking at Easterling Primary School to about 130 students. She also stated they have a new BFW Post at the old JPK Building and they will be having their grand opening very soon. She thanked all of her comrades for protecting and serving this great country. She mentioned the luncheon on Saturday, adding that Mayor Brady did a good job with the welcome. She stated that Mayor Brady and his wife served and thanked him for that.

Mayor Pro Tem Hunt thanked everyone for the support in the passing of Judge Speth and her family. He acknowledged that she was a top notch person and a great human being. He was able to see her on a weekly and sometimes daily basis. He stated that she will be greatly missed and she was a great asset to the community.

Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to move Ms. Marilyn Woodberry up on the agenda to address council before executive session, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker. The motion carried unanimously.

13. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Marilyn Woodberry started by saying, "My purpose is not to rehash the controversy or even to focus on the interaction between the Mayor and I." She added that little is accomplished when we define people by their mistakes. She stated that Jesus taught his disciples to love their enemies assuming that the action would not be returned. She added that we assume the worst in others but the best in ourselves and Jesus was very clear that we are called to be more than that. We should have as much mercy for others as we have for ourselves. She stated that our culture needs to see us respond to negativity with gospel work rather than outrage and pity. They need to see us forgive others as we forgive ourselves.

Mayor Brady thanked her for her comments and for coming.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Ronald Atkinson made a motion to go into executive session to discuss the Personnel Matter – Municipal Court, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier. The motion carried unanimously.

13. POSSIBLE ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION

Returning from executive session Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier. Mayor Brady stated that there was no action taken during executive session.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion due to the sad and untimely death of Judge Patricia Speth to advertise a replacement for the Municipal Court for Judge Speth, seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Brady stated that after Hurricane Florence there was a lot of flooding in the City of Marion. He read this insert from the Municipal Association's magazine, "Lake City is not unlike small cities or even larger ones that due to high price tag and resources, have consistently deferred maintenance of its system and is reaching a point where it can no longer afford to not address its aging infrastructure," said Snowden." He added that it is important for the communities to educate their residents, stop making excuses and figure out a way to go forward to make necessary repairs. He stated that the Municipal Association sees infrastructure as an issue, he sees it as an issue and he hopes council sees it as an issue. What needs to be considered is how to pay for the City's storm water maintenance and repairs and that the budget is only so big. He suggested that looking at the budget for next year, the Council needs to find a way to fund the storm water maintenance program. He added that Dillon along with other municipalities have placed a storm water fee on each water meter. This money will only be used for storm water maintenance and that it is a fee per residential water meter with a different fee for commercial properties.

Mayor Pro Tem Hunt added that the City needs a source of income to provide a future for the future generations. If we continue to have storms such as the previous ones, it will not be good for the City to constantly be under water.

Mayor Brady stated that he will be contacting Dillon and some other municipalities to figure out their formula and how to institute it.

Councilman Atkinson added that there is time to make a plan and suggested that Mayor Brady and Mr. Ammons formulate a plan and put it on the agenda for December or January to discuss and move forward when it's time to prepare the

next budget. He stated that the vacuum truck is not being utilized and may need replacing, but he supports the Mayor's idea.

Councilman Michael Baker stated that it needs to be on the agenda by April when Mrs. Patricia starts the budget.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson added that with just two inches of rain, Catfish was out of the banks again.

Councilman Michael Baker mentioned that the logs are starting to block the water.

Mayor Brady stated that he needs to have conversations with Congressman Tom Rice and Senator Lindsey Graham to find funding on those projects to clean Catfish and Strawberry Street Canal. He added that he spoke with Senator Kent Williams and Representative Lucas Atkinson. He ended by stating that he would be working with Mr. Ammons to bring it back to council probably by the January meeting.

14. ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to discuss, Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Ashley Brady

City Clerk Gwendolyn T. Davis
Taped: November 13, 2018.